



# Special Session

<b>Agenda Item #</b>	4
<b>Meeting Date</b>	December 5, 2005
<b>Prepared By</b>	Wayne Hobbs Deputy City Manager 
<b>Approved By</b>	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager 

<b>Discussion Item</b>	Montgomery County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan
<b>Background</b>	<p>In late 2000, federal regulations substantially changed the requirements for hazard mitigation planning. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 mandated that local jurisdictions have in place a state and federally approved mitigation plan in order to be eligible for mitigation grant funding.</p> <p>The Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management took the lead in developing the new Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan was developed in partnership with the members of the County's Emergency Management Group that included County Agencies and emergency service providers, the Cities of Rockville, Gaithersburg and Takoma Park, the Montgomery County School Board, Montgomery College, and representatives from the utilities including PEPCO, Allegheny Power, BG&amp;E, WSSC, and Verizon. The Montgomery County Local Emergency Planning Council also reviewed the plan for those activities related to the management of hazardous materials. A draft of the plan was forwarded to the Maryland Emergency Agency and review comments were returned in February 2005. The revised document incorporates the responses to the State comments. This effort was one of the steps in creating a community more resilient to natural, technological, and societal hazard events and disasters.</p> <p>Only those municipalities that have zoning, building or land-use authority must adopt the County's plan or create their own plan in order to continue to receive pre- and post-disaster mitigation grant money.</p>
<b>Policy</b>	Adopting the County's Plan as our own is consistent with the efforts of the Regional Mutual Aid Agreement and the City's emergency planning. Adoption of the plan is needed to remain eligible for State and Federal Disaster Relief Funding.
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	None at this time.
<b>Attachments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Executive Summary - Montgomery County 2005 Regional Mitigation Plan.</li> <li>2. Table of Contents of the Regional Mitigation Plan.</li> <li>3. Proposed Resolution adopting the Multi-Jurisdictional Montgomery County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.</li> </ol>
<b>Recommendation</b>	That Council adopt the attached Resolution.
<b>Special Consideration</b>	The entire plan is 459 pages in length and is available on CD. The Deputy City Manager will provide a CD upon request.

Introduced By:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2005 -**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK,  
MARYLAND, ADOPTING THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY MULTI-HAZARD  
MITIGATION PLAN, AS REQUIRED BY TITLE 44, CODE OF FEDERAL  
REGULATIONS, PART 201, AS AUTHORIZED BY THE DISASTER MITIGATION  
ACT OF 2000, IN ORDER TO REMAIN ELIGIBLE FOR STATE AND FEDERAL  
DISASTER RELIEF FUNDING**

**WHEREAS,** the City of Takoma Park recognizes the threat that natural hazards pose to people and property; and

**WHEREAS,** undertaking hazard mitigation actions before disasters occur will reduce the potential for harm to people and property and save taxpayer dollars; and

**WHEREAS,** an adopted all hazards mitigation plan is required as a condition of future grant funding for mitigation projects; and

**WHEREAS,** the City of Takoma Park participated in the planning process with Montgomery County to prepare a Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND:**

1. Hereby adopts the Montgomery County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
2. The City of Takoma Park will continue to participate in the updating and expansion of the Montgomery County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan in future years; and
3. The City of Takoma Park will further seek to encourage the businesses, industries and community groups operating within and/or for the benefit of the City of Takoma Park to also participate in the updating and expansion of the Montgomery County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, and
4. This resolution is effective immediately.

Adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2005.

Attest:

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Jessie Carpenter  
City Clerk

# **Montgomery County**

## **2005 Multi-Hazard Regional Mitigation Plan**

### ***Executive Summary***

In 1990, Montgomery County was one of the very first jurisdictions in the country to develop a Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, following the federally declared Windstorm of June 1989. This initial effort met the newly enacted federal standards for post disaster hazard mitigation planning. Following State guidance, the Plan emphasized Maryland's highest ranked hazard at that time, flood events. In June 2000 the County Council formally adopted the Hazard Mitigation Plan as Annex Z of the Emergency Operations Plan.

In late 2000 federal regulations substantially changed the requirements for hazard mitigation planning. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 mandated that local jurisdictions have in place a state and federally approved mitigation plan in order to be eligible for mitigation grant funding. The initial submission date was November 2004. Montgomery County and the other jurisdictions in Maryland were given an extension until August 2005 to have their plan submitted to Maryland Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The Office of Emergency Management took the lead in developing the new Multi-Hazard Regional Mitigation Plan. The plan was developed in partnership with the members of the County's Emergency Management Group that included County agencies and emergency service providers, the Cities of Rockville, Gaithersburg, and Takoma Park, the Montgomery County School Board, Montgomery College, and representatives from the utilities including PEPCO, Allegheny Power, BG&E, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and Verizon. The Montgomery County Local Emergency Planning Council also reviewed the plan for those activities related to the management of hazardous materials. A draft Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (RHMP) was forwarded to Maryland Emergency Management Agency and review comments were returned in February 2005. The revised document incorporates the responses to the State comments. This effort was one of the steps in creating a community more resilient to natural, technological and societal hazard events and disasters.

A second planning phase started in June of this year, welcoming additional partners to participate in the next submission. This on-going process involves four basic steps:

**Step 1:** Coordinating a countywide planning process that promotes participation from a wide variety of organizations, disciplines and representatives of the community.

**Step 2:** Identifying the hazards that can occur in our region and analyze the impact and our vulnerability to these events.

**Step 3:** Developing a local mitigation strategy to build upon and establish priorities and activities to reduce our vulnerability to the impact of hazards.

**Step 4:** Seizing opportunities to carry out mitigation strategies and activities that benefit participating agencies and the region.

The basic goal of the State and County Hazard Mitigation Plans is to reduce loss of life and property damage associated with hazard events in Maryland. Montgomery County's mitigation plan demonstrates its commitment to reduce risks associated with natural and technological hazards and to guide resource allocation with public and private partners to provide a disaster resistant community.

The Montgomery County Multi- Hazard Mitigation Plan outlines Montgomery County's prevention and risk reduction efforts to reduce losses from future disasters. It is an old saw that states, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Mitigation is both pro-active and cost effective since historically dollars spent in risk reduction or prevention efforts<sup>1</sup> are considerably less than replacement costs from disasters. Response and recovery measures are by their very nature reactive. It is not possible to undo the loss of life from catastrophic events, but it is possible to prevent or minimize the effects and damage caused by significant events. The County takes very seriously its responsibility to meet weigh the cost of prevention and mitigation measures and to meet the challenges presented through planning practices that emphasize economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has recommended, and this Plan follows their guidance in focusing this Plan on the natural hazards that Montgomery County is likely to experience. Future versions may incorporate technological hazards-Emphasis is placed on high and moderate risks, with less attention to those hazards which have been determined to be of low risk based on location and risk exposure, unlikely occurrence, or long standing mitigation measures already in place. As part of the planning process to identify hazards likely to occur in the County, the probability of occurrence is balanced against the exposure to the risk.

For example, Montgomery County has a nationally recognized Emergency Management program that brings together public and private partners for the purpose of planning for, and responding to, major emergencies and disasters. This group of public and private partners known as the Emergency Management Group, is comprised of public safety agencies, municipalities, utilities, the School Board, Montgomery College, and private voluntary organizations supporting disaster response. They bi-annually review and rank hazards for planning purposes. Hurricanes and windstorms rank high for risk impact and probability while brushfires and conflagrations rank low.<sup>1</sup>

This Hazard Mitigation Plan has seven main sections and 15 appendices for supporting documents. The Plan provides an introduction and background to Hazard Mitigation Planning and federal mandates, the foundation of the Plan, goals and objectives, a profile of the County's geography, climate, and diverse populations, agency backgrounds, hazard specific information, vulnerability assessment and risk analysis, and all-hazard mitigation measures.

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- 1 Former FEMA Director James Lee Witt, in remarks to the National Hurricane Conference to introduce Project Impact, indicated that every dollar spent in mitigation could off-set four dollars spent during recovery.
  - 2 Montgomery County Emergency Operations Plan, Basic Plan, Appendix BP-1, as amended is reviewed and updated bi-annually.

## Vision

Montgomery County Government through the Office of Emergency Management and the multi-agency Emergency Management Group has formally embraced their role in hazard mitigation as part of their adoption of comprehensive Emergency Management: Preparedness, Mitigation, Response and Recovery.

***To keep our communities safe and healthy by providing comprehensive and effective life safety and property protection services through diverse partnerships.***

## Mission

In conjunction with diverse partnerships, Montgomery County is committed to developing and implementing hazard mitigation strategies that will help to make our community more disaster resistant.

# Hazard Mitigation

- 250 million lives are “devastated every year because of natural disasters.”
- Is sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property.



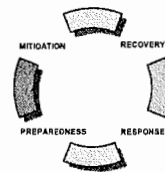
## Hazard Mitigation Plan Goals

1. Protect Life and Property
2. Institutionalize Hazard Mitigation Planning
3. Continuity of Government
4. Community Education
5. Environmental Protection and Development
6. Emergency Services Capability Improvement
7. Foster Inter-jurisdictional and Community Partnerships
8. Monitor, Maintain and Implement Plan

# Why Plan and Prepare?

Four phases of emergency planning and implementation:

1. Mitigation - reduce or eliminate the probability of an occurrence.
  2. Preparedness - increase response capabilities, planning for an effective and efficient use of resources, and preplanning and protection of key infrastructure and facilities.
- Response - provide emergency assistance to victims and protection property.



## Types of Hazards

- Natural hazards - severe thunderstorms, windstorms, hurricane, tornado, winter storms, flood, mudslides, extreme heat, extreme cold, drought, earthquake, sink holes, insect plagues, and wildfire.
- Technological hazards - result from the failure of man-made systems or infrastructures or processes. These hazards include utility disruptions (power, water, natural gas, and phone systems), dam failures, pollution emergencies, conflagrations, hazardous materials releases, and significant transportation disruption.
- Societal hazards - adverse conditions that arise due to various political, physiological, and psychological factors, influences and events. These hazards include health/disease epidemics, civil disorder, commodity shortages, war, terrorism and school violence.

## Montgomery County Risk Analysis

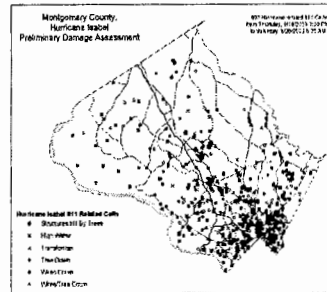
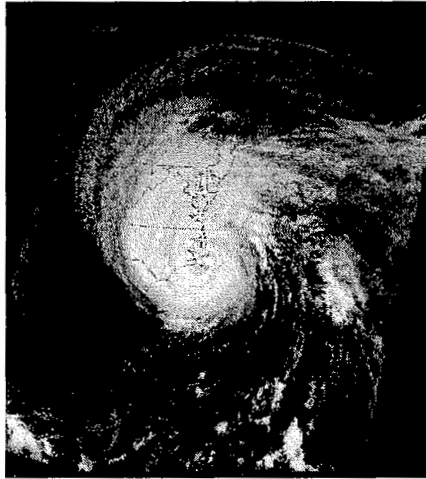
- High or medium-high risk for hazards that involve wind and water such as; droughts, floods, ice, dam failures.
- This area has recurrently experienced blizzards, hurricanes, floods, extreme cold spells, heat waves, drought conditions and tornadoes.

## What Does Natural Hazards Montgomery County Plan For?

- Droughts
- Earthquakes
- Floods/Flash Flooding
- Hurricanes/Topical Storms
- Tornadoes
- Blizzards/Icestorms
- Windstorms/thunderstorms
- Dam Failure



## Hurricane Isabel September 18, 2003



## LaPlata Tornado damage



•Montgomery County does not have many tornadoes. However, the area has seen 18 since 1879, an average of one every seven years.

## Draft Plan availability

- Beginning mid September at  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/homelandsecurity](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/homelandsecurity)

Or by calling 240-777-2200 for a printed copy of compact disc

## Montgomery County Homeland Security Department

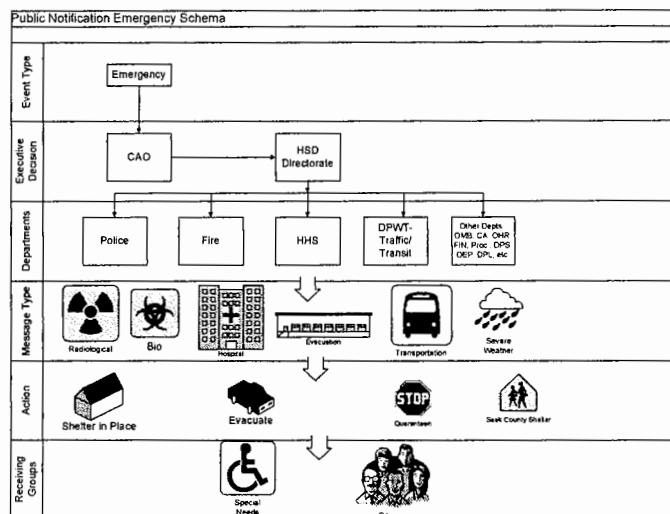
- **Preparing for the Unthinkable – An All Hazards Approach to Mitigation of Incidents**
  - Small or large
  - Individual to mass population
  - Disruption or damage to infrastructure
  - Natural or Man-Made Disasters
    - Weather, HAZMAT, Arson, Explosives, Epidemics, Pandemics
  - Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)
    - Biological, Chemical, Explosive, Radiological, Nuclear
  - Announced or unannounced
- **Ready and Response Capable 24/7/365**

## MC Homeland Security Department

### Signing up for Alerts and Emergency Messages

1. Go to: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov)
2. Link to: [Alert Montgomery](#)
3. Then type in their name, telephone number and service provider of mobile devices, email address and select the emergency notification to be received (weather, emergency, transportation or all).
4. Messaging is enabled upon registration.
5. If a text-device fails to receive a message three times the system automatically sends a message to the other registered devices asking the person to check the address, phone or pager number of the failed device.

## Public InformationFlow



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